CALL FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2012

CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 319 NONPOINT SOURCE (NPS) GRANTS

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ACRONYMS

Acronym	Definition
BMP	Best Management Practices
CWA	Clean Water Act
DEQ	Department of Environmental Quality (Montana)
DNRC	Department of Natural Resources & Conservation
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency (US)
ESA	Endangered Species Act
GRTS	Grant Reporting and Tracking System database
MDEQ	Montana Department of Environmental Quality
MWCC	Montana Watershed Coordination Council
NPS	Nonpoint Source
QAPP	Quality Assurance Project Plan
SAP	Sampling and Analysis Plan
SOW	Scope of Work
SWPP	Source Water Protection Plan
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
WAWG	Water Activities Work Group
WRP	Watershed Restoration Plans

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is issuing this Call for Grant Applications under Section 319(h) of the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA). DEQ is the lead Montana agency for the Clean Water Act Section 319 grant program. Information in this Call may be subject to change based on available funding and shifting DEQ and EPA priorities. If changes become necessary, DEQ will post the changes on the DEQ Nonpoint Source Program 319 Grant Information website at http://deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/nonpoint/319Grants.mcpx

1.1 GOALS OF THE 319 GRANT PROGRAM

The primary goals of the 319 grant program are:

- Protect the quality of clean water.
- Restore water quality in waterbodies whose beneficial uses are impaired by nonpoint source (NPS) pollution and whose water quality does not meet state standards.

Both goals are accomplished by implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) and conducting education and outreach (E&O) activities. DEQ strongly encourages development of science-based, locally-supported Watershed Restoration Plans (WRPs) to guide these efforts.

The 2007 Montana Nonpoint Source Management Plan (NPS Plan) describes how DEQ hopes to see the above goals achieved. The NPS Plan contains specific, state nonpoint source program goals, priorities, and identified BMPs. 319-funded projects must address goals identified in the NPS Plan. A copy of the NPS plan can be downloaded from http://www.deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/nonpoint/2007NONPOINTPLAN/Final/NPSPlan.pdf

DEQ prefers to fund 319 projects that implement an approved Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), a completed WRP, or an approved Source Water Protection Plan (SWPP).

1.2 GRANT CATEGORIES

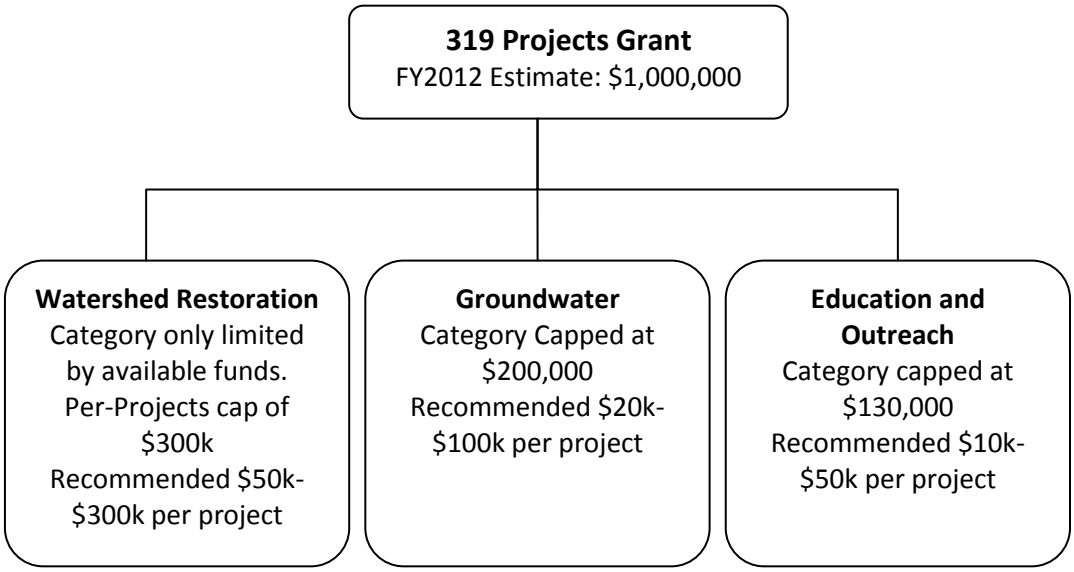
DEQ is calling for grant applications in three categories. Applications should fall within the funding ranges established for each category.

Watershed Restoration
Recommended range of $20,000 - $300,000 in 319 funds per application. DEQ anticipates approximately $600,000 in 319 funds will be available for distribution in this category. Following the review of final applications, funds remaining in either of the other two categories may be added to the funds available for the Watershed Restoration category.

Groundwater Protection/Restoration
Recommended range of $20,000 to $100,000 in 319 funds per application. DEQ anticipates approximately $200,000 in 319 funds will be available for distribution in this category.

Education & Outreach
Recommended range of $10,000 - $50,000 in 319 funds per application. DEQ anticipates approximately $130,000 in 319 funds will be available for distribution in this category.

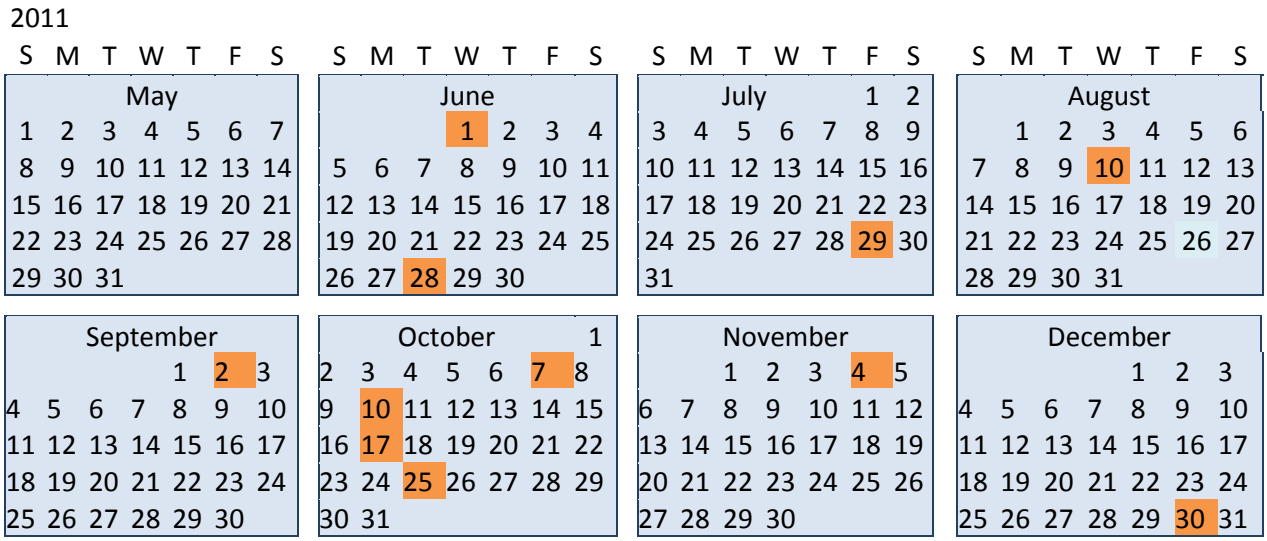
Figure 1.1 - FY12 Funding Allocations Chart



1.3 FY12 Grant Schedule at a Glance

Figure 1.2 - Schedule for Fiscal Year 2012 319 Grants

Date	Timeline	Time to Next Submittal
6/1/2011	Issue Call for Grant Applications	8.5 weeks
6/28/2011	319 Grant Workshop, Focus of Changes for FY12	
Stage 1		
7/29/2011	319 Project Proposals Due to DEQ	9 weeks
8/10/2011	MWCC WAWG Review Meeting	
9/2/2011	DEQ Comments Due to Applicants	
Stage 2		
10/7/2011	Final Applications Due to DEQ	2 weeks
10/10/2011	Final Applications Posted to 319 Wiki site	
10/17/2011	Comments on Final Application Due to DEQ	
10/25/2011	Evaluation by Agency Review Panel	1.5 weeks
Stage 3		
11/4/2011	Letters for Notice of Intent to Award Mailed Out	8 weeks
12/30/2011	Final Scopes of Work Due to DEQ	
TBD	DEQ Submits State of MT Application for EPA Review	
TBD	DEQ Sends Out Grant Agreements to Project Sponsors	
TBD	Project Sponsors Return Signed Agreements	
TBD	Funds Available	



1.4 Helpful Resources

The following information may prove useful as you prepare your application:

- The 2007 Montana Nonpoint Source Management Plan (2007 NPS Plan) can be found at http://www.deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/nonpoint/2007NONPOINTPLAN/Final/NPSPlan.pdf
- A list of watersheds with approved TMDLs can be found at http://www.deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/TMDL/finalReports.asp

- A map of watersheds with approved TMDLs can be found in **Attachment C**.
- A list of the nine minimum elements of a Watershed Restoration Plan (WRP) can be found in **Attachment B**.
- A copy of the current Impaired Waters list can be viewed or downloaded from the following website: http://cwaic.mt.gov/wqrep/2010/Appendix_A_ImpairedWaters.pdf
- Information on uploading data to MT-eWQX can be obtained from the DEQ, MT-eWQX Support website http://deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/datamgmt/MTEWQX.mcpx or by contacting Jolene McQuillan at jmcquillan@mt.gov or (406) 247-4436.
- Completed source water delineation and assessment reports (SWDARs) for public water supplies are available at: http://nris.state.mt.us/wis/swap/swapquery.asp

2.0 General Requirements

The following requirements apply to all grant application categories.

2.1 Applicant Eligibility

Applicants must be either a governmental entity or a nonprofit organization. A governmental entity is a local, state, or federal office that has been established and authorized by law. Nonprofit organizations are identified as having a tax exempt declaration of 501(c-3) from the Internal Revenue Service.

2.2 Project Eligibility

All projects must address water quality problems arising from nonpoint source (NPS) pollution. NPS pollution comes from diffuse sources such as polluted runoff and streambank erosion, or from polluting conditions such as the temperature changes that result from a loss of streambank vegetation and shading.

319 funds cannot be used for projects that implement requirements of a point source discharge permit. For example, wastewater treatment plant upgrades.

2.2 Cost Share Requirements

Applicants must be able to meet a 40% cost share (also known as match) for the project. The cost share can be from private, state, local, or non-profit sources. It can be in the form of cash, other grants, or in-kind services that have a direct benefit to the project. Cost share cannot be from federal sources. Applicants must remember that the match can only be applied to one project. For example, if your project is funded by a combination of a Future Fisheries grant, 319 funds, and a $5,000 Trout Unlimited grant, you cannot use the Trout Unlimited grant to meet both a $5,000 Future Fisheries cost share requirement and a $5,000 319 grant cost share requirement. However, you could apply $2,500 of the $5,000 to each.

Use the following formula to calculate the amount of cost share you will be required to provide:

$(X \div 0.60) - X = Y$

Where
X = the amount of 319 funds you are requesting
Y = the amount of cost share you will be required to provide

For example, if you are requesting $100,000 in 319 funds, your equation would look like this:

($100,000 ÷ 0.60) - $100,000 = $66,666

2.3 Administrative Costs

Applicants may not use more than 10% of the requested 319 funds to cover administrative costs. Administrative costs include but are not limited to charges for:

- Preparation and submittal of status, annual and final reports.
- Preparation and submittal of reimbursement requests.
- Office space, equipment and supplies.
- Most forms of travel.
- Overhead costs.
- Expense/budget tracking.
- Phone bills associated with the project.
- Insurance.

2.4 Watershed Restoration Plan

DEQ strongly encourages the development and implementation of DEQ-accepted Watershed Restoration Plans (WRPs). For applications under the Watershed Restoration category, you are required to have a WRP in place or develop one as part of your project. To be accepted by DEQ, a WRP must adequately address the nine minimum elements established by EPA for Watershed Plans. **Attachment B** lists these nine minimum elements. A maximum of $30,000 in 319 funds may be spent on the development of a WRP.

2.5 Operation and Maintenance

319 grantees are responsible for operating and maintaining the practices installed using 319 funds. As a deliverable, 319 grantees must include signed landowner agreements allowing DEQ and EPA to have periodic access to project sites for continued monitoring. Access can be conditioned on DEQ notifying the landowner in advance, inviting the landowner to be present during monitoring, and providing the landowner with copies of all data/photos/etc. obtained during the monitoring event. At a minimum, the agreements must allow yearly access for 10 years or the life of the practice (whichever is greater). If DEQ and/or EPA determine that any of the practices are not being properly operated or maintained, DEQ and/or EPA may require the grantee to refund the 319 funds expended to implement the practice.

2.6 Applicant Ability to Manage Grants, Past Performance

In the final application, you must provide evidence that your organization is able to successfully manage grants and contracts. This evidence includes:

- A list of project participants, their roles in project management, and their qualifications.
- A list of all state-sponsored, natural resource grant agreements managed by your organization in the last 4 years, along with contact information for the granting agency.

In addition, DEQ will take into consideration past performance on previous 319 grants your organization may have received. If your organization currently has a 319 contract, DEQ will take into account how well the contract is progressing towards completion.

2.7 GRANTS VS. CONTRACTS

While 319 grants are referred to as "grants", they are managed as "contracts". The term "grants" typically refers to funding awarded with few strings attached, minimal oversight by the granting entity, and reporting requirements often limited to a single, final report. "Contracts", on the other hand, include a legally binding, contractual agreement, identifying specific products that must be submitted prior to receiving reimbursement. Contracts typically involve additional oversight, and the expectation that funds will only be used for tasks specifically identified in the contract.

2.8 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

All 319 grant contracts include some basic reporting requirements. The reporting requirements are:

- Submit quarterly (minimum) status reports. The status reports must be submitted each time you submit a request for payment, or on a quarterly basis (whichever is more frequent).
- Submit annual report(s). Annual reports are progress-based covering a specified time period.
- Submit a final report. The final report consists of a document that acts as a "stand alone" report for the entire project. Parties unfamiliar with the project must be able to read the report and have a clear understanding of the project from inception to completion. As applicable, the final report must include copies of all collected data, copies of all produced documents, photo documentation, an analysis of accomplishments, a description of any obstacles encountered, and a complete financial report accounting for expenditure of 319 and matching funds, as well as a detailed comparison of anticipated and actual costs.
- Data reports. All data collected, compiled, or analyzed as a part of the project must be submitted to DEQ. All monitoring data collected as part of a 319 grant must be uploaded into the MT-eWQX database. Depending upon your familiarity with this process, you can expect to spend a day or more learning the procedure and submitting the data.
- All reports must be submitted in electronic as well as hardcopy format, for inclusion in EPA's Grant Reporting and Tracking System (GRTS) database.

2.9 GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following list includes suggestions for you to consider as you prepare and submit your application. Issues raised here reflect experiences from previous funding cycles. The recommendations found here may or may not apply to your specific project.

- If you copy and paste text from applications you've prepared for other funding sources, please ensure that this information is appropriate and tailored to the 319 application.
- Please do not submit an application that protests a TMDL as this is not the appropriate forum.
- Double check your math (e.g. do the figures in your budget match up with the figures in your scope of work?).
- Call DEQ Watershed Protection Section staff for help as you fill out your application. Our goal is to help you submit the best application possible.

- Begin developing project ideas and filling out the application forms well in advance of the application deadlines.
- Apply for the funds that you need. Be realistic, and don't leave yourself short. Remember to budget for monitoring and reporting. Also, determine ahead of time whether or not you may need to hire a subcontractor to do engineering, monitoring, or other specialized tasks, and budget accordingly.
- 319 grant contracts typically have a lifespan of around 3 years. Whenever possible, try and apply for funding for projects that can be fully implemented within a 3-year period.
- Show that you have reached out to all relevant federal, state, local and private sources of funding and resources that may be available to assist you in completing your project.
- Demonstrate that you have sought and obtained support from key stakeholders.
- Explain how you will document the water quality benefits achieved as a result of your project.
- Identify the specific responsibilities of key stakeholders in the completion of the project.
- Provide relevant details about the problem you are addressing or the geographical area in which you will be working. Don't assume that the people reviewing your application will have any specific familiarity with these things.
- When describing the potential effects from your project, use logical, evidence-based arguments; avoid speculation.

3.0 Application Process

The fiscal year 2012 application process is different from the process used in previous years. Changes have been made to simplify the process for both the applicants and the reviewers.

3.1 Application Forms

For the fiscal year 2012 Call for Grant Applications DEQ will be using a combination of two different PDF forms. The first is the "Project Proposal Form"; this form replaces both the 319 Summary Form and Draft Application of previous 319 funding cycles. The second form, "Final Application Form" replaces the 319 Summary Form and Final Application of previous 319 funding cycles. The forms are available online at the DEQ 319 Grant Program page (http://deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/nonpoint/319GrantInfo.mcpx) and can be used with a free version of Adobe Reader (to download this free version go to http://get.adobe.com/reader/). For assistance using these forms please contact Stephanie Crider at 406-444-2478 or by email at scrider@mt.gov.

3.2 Application Attachments

You must include two attachments with your Final Application form:

- A project map or set of maps.
- Letters of support.

Provide a project map(s) showing the location and size of project activities and/or aquifer. Maps must describe the project location by section/township/range, and where helpful, longitude and latitude. Appropriate information incorporated on the map may include: land uses, land ownership, project location, and important water resources (including major wetlands). Also, provide information on the locations of present, past, and future sampling sites, problem sources or critical areas, wells, natural springs, and point sources.

Final applications must be accompanied by at least three letters of support. If your project calls for on-the-ground work on specific landowners' property, you must include letters of support from each of these landowners. You are encouraged to submit more than three letters of support where possible. Letters should demonstrate a broad base of support.

3.3 APPLICATION SCHEDULE

The application process will happen in two stages. The first stage will be submittal and review of the Project Proposal Form, the second stage will be submittal and review of the Final Application Form and the two attachments.

YOU MUST COMPLETE BOTH STAGES OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS.

In each stage, you must submit the application materials in both electronic and hard copy formats. Electronic documents must be delivered via email or electronic media to DEQ by 5:00 pm on the application deadline. All electronic application forms and attachments must be delivered in either PDF or Microsoft Office Suite compatible file format. Hard copy documents must be printed, signed, and postmarked by 5:00 pm on the application deadline. **Section 1.0** contains a complete list of application deadlines.

Hard copies of the application materials should be mailed to:

Robert Ray, Watershed Protection Section Supervisor
Water Quality Planning Bureau
Department of Environmental Quality
1520 E. Sixth Avenue
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Email transmissions must be submitted to: rray@mt.gov.

If you have any questions on submitting the application, please contact Stephanie Crider at 406-444-2478 or scrider@mt.gov.

3.3.1 Stage 1 - Project Proposal

The deadline for submitting project proposals is **Friday, July 29, 2011**. Failure to meet the Stage 1 submittal deadline will disqualify an application from consideration. Project proposals must be complete and address all components found in the Project Proposal Form. Do not submit vague project proposals as placeholders.

The Montana Watershed Coordination Council (MWCC), Water Activities Work Group (WAWG), Ground Water Work Group, and the Education & Outreach Work Group, along with DEQ Staff, will review the corresponding categories of project proposals and provide comments and recommendations. DEQ will assemble the comments and provide them to you in written form by **September 2, 2011**.

3.3.2 Stage 2 - Final Application

The deadline for submitting Final Applications and attachments is **Friday, October 7, 2011**. To increase the likelihood of receiving funding, you should address the recommendations made by DEQ and the MWCC Work Groups during Stage 1. Please discuss the recommendations with DEQ Staff or Work Group members so that you are sure you fully understand the intent of the recommendations. DEQ will chair an Agency Review panel (made up of government agency representatives), which will serve as the final technical review committee for the 319 applications. Failure to meet the deadline will disqualify an application from consideration.

After the final submission deadline, all communication regarding the applications must be conducted through Robert Ray, DEQ Watershed Protection Section Manager. Mr. Ray can be contacted by telephone at 406-444-5319 or via email at rray@mt.gov.

3.3.3 Final Application Evaluations

Applications will be evaluated by the Agency Review Panel on Tuesday October 25, 2011. You will be offered an opportunity to present your project to the Panel. Presentations will be limited in time (DEQ will determine the allowable time limit), and DEQ Staff will coordinate all media needs.

Evaluations for all projects will use category-specific Scoring Sheets. Preliminary Scoring Sheets are included with this document as **Attachment A-1**, **A-2** and **A-3**. DEQ reserves the right to modify the Scoring Sheets at a later date. If Scoring Sheets or any other parts of this document are modified, DEQ will post the changes on the DEQ Nonpoint Source Program 319 Grant Information website at http://deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/nonpoint/319Grants.mcpx

The Agency Review Panel will make general recommendations regarding funding levels (e.g. fully fund, partially fund, don't fund, don't fund tasks x, y and z). DEQ reserves the right to accept, modify, or reject the Panel's recommendations.

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has final approval authority over all projects selected by DEQ for funding. EPA reviews the final Scope of Work (SOW) for TMDL components, consistency with Montana's 2007 NPS Management Plan, consistency with EPA 319 Program Guidance, and overall impacts on water quality. EPA, in consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, will also conduct an Endangered Species Act (ESA) review to establish necessary parameters for compliance with the Act. Upon receipt of EPA approval, DEQ will issue Grant Agreements (contracts) to the successful applicants.

4.0 Criteria Specifically For Watershed Restoration Projects

Section 4.0 includes requirements, priorities, and recommendations that pertain specifically to the Watershed Restoration Project category. These are in addition to requirements mentioned in **Sections 1.0** through **3.0**. This guidance may or may not appear in the Scoring Sheets used by the Agency Review Panel. However, it will factor heavily into other parts of the application review process, and it will ultimately influence which projects DEQ recommends to EPA for funding.

4.1 REQUIREMENTS

Requirements are things that must be addressed in order for your application to be considered for funding.

- Projects in this category must focus on planning and implementing on-the-ground projects that will reduce nonpoint source (NPS) pollution to surface water.
- Projects must implement goals and objectives identified in the 2007 Montana Nonpoint Source Management Plan. Hardcopies are available upon request, or electronically at http://deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/nonpoint/2007NONPOINTPLAN/Final/NPSPlan.pdf .
- In addition, the following requirements apply to all projects in this category.

4.1.1 Watershed Restoration Plan Component

All applications must either implement an existing, DEQ-accepted Watershed Restoration Plan (WRP), or include the development of a WRP. The WRP must address the EPA's nine minimum elements for a Watershed Plan, and it must be reviewed and accepted by DEQ. A description of EPA's nine minimum elements can be found in EPA's *Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters*, available online at http://www.epa.gov/owow/NPS/watershed_handbook/pdf/ch02.pdf or in **Attachment B** of this document. DEQ staff can further assist you in determining how to prepare a WRP that will include the nine minimum elements and serve as an effective planning tool to guide water quality restoration efforts in your watershed. DEQ limits the amount of 319 Watershed Restoration funds that can be allocated towards creation of a WRP to $30,000. The cost cap only applies to the 319 funds requested. Your organization can obligate greater amounts of funds from other funding sources in order to meet match requirements or improve the quality of your WRP.

4.1.2 Monitoring Component

All projects must contain a task dedicated to monitoring. If you are proposing to conduct on-the-ground projects to address nitrogen, phosphorus or sediment pollution, the task must include a mechanism for determining the annual load reductions achieved by your project. Monitoring does not necessarily mean obtaining a sample and sending it to a lab. It can also include modeling, surveying, aerial reconnaissance, and other forms of evaluation. All water quality monitoring must be guided by a DEQ-approved Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP) and/or a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). If your organization does not already have an existing, approved, applicable SAP/QAPP, you will be required to develop one prior to conducting any sampling. You should expect the development and approval process to take at least a month, depending upon the complexity of the project, your own familiarity with SAPs and QAPPs, and the availability of DEQ review staff. All monitoring data collected as part of a 319 grant must be uploaded into the MT-eWQX database. Depending upon your familiarity with this process, you can expect to spend a day or more learning the procedure and submitting the data.

4.1.3 Education and Outreach Component

All projects must contain a task dedicated to education and outreach (E&O). The E&O task must identify the target audience, information to be disseminated, method of delivery, and method of monitoring the E&O effort to evaluate effectiveness. The E&O task must be related to both your project and water quality. For example, if your project involves installing riparian buffers in the Green Cow Creek watershed, your E&O task should address riparian buffers in the Green Cow Creek watershed.

DEQ limits the amount of 319 Watershed Restoration funds that can be allocated towards E&O to 10% of the total 319 funds requested for each grant. The cost cap only applies to the 319 funds requested. Applicants can obligate greater amounts of funds for their E&O activities from other funding sources in order to meet the match requirements. Creation of a WRP is not considered an E&O project (i.e. the 10% E&O cap will not be used to prevent the expenditure of available funds for the creation of a WRP). On the other hand, efforts to disseminate an existing WRP would be considered an E&O project. You must justify the costs associated with E&O activities. Justification must be based on the activities' benefit to the project and positive influence towards improving water quality.

4.1.4 Operation and Maintenance Component

An Operation and Maintenance (O&M) component is necessary if the proposed project will include the installation of on-the-ground practices. A full O&M plan will need to be developed as part of the project (if applicable). Operation includes the administration, management, and performance of non-maintenance actions needed to keep the completed practice safe and functioning as intended. Maintenance includes work to prevent deterioration of the practice, repair damage, or replacement of the practice to its original condition if one or more components fail.

If you are proposing on-the-ground activities, you must provide a detailed plan for the operation and maintenance of each implemented practice. For each practice, the plan must include the following:

- A reasonable, expected life span for the practice. The life span must be determined by mutual agreement and definition between the applicant and DEQ, and shall be based on similar projects and programs.
- A description of how the practice will be operated and maintained to ensure that it remains functional for the duration of its intended lifespan.
- The name, phone number, and address of the person that DEQ and EPA will need to notify in order to inspect the practice.

4.1.5 Irrigation Efficiency and Temperature Reduction

Frequently, DEQ receives applications for funding for irrigation efficiency improvement projects. The typical rationale provided for funding these projects with Watershed Restoration dollars has been that if farmers use less water for irrigation, more will be left in the stream to maintain lower water temperatures during hot summer months. However, this only holds true if the surplus water is actually left in the stream, and not taken out by the next person downstream or the neighbor with a junior water right. If you propose these types of projects, you must provide a reasonable mechanism for helping to ensure that the surplus water remains in the stream.

4.2 PRIORITIES

Priorities are issues or project sub-categories that DEQ would like to see addressed. They are not required, but choosing to address one or more of them could significantly increase the likelihood of receiving 319 funds. **The highest priority is given to addressing NPS pollution problems identified in a DEQ-approved TMDL document.** Other priorities include:

- NPS pollution problems identified on the 2010 Impaired Waters list at http://cwaic.mt.gov/wqrep/2010/Appendix_A_ImpairedWaters.pdf .
- Projects that lead to significant, measurable, long-lasting reductions in NPS pollution.
- NPS pollution from agriculture (livestock and/or farming).
- NPS pollution from silviculture (logging).

- NPS pollution from urban and/or construction related runoff.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following list includes suggestions for you to consider as you prepare and submit your application. Issues raised here reflect experiences from previous funding cycles. Not all of them will apply to your specific project.

- Be realistic when planning your project budget. Make sure you plan for enough money to complete the project on-time, according to plan, and without having to work 60 hour weeks for months on end.
- Work collaboratively. Obtain support from key stakeholders and relevant funding sources. Seek opportunities to leverage funding and resources.
- Address the most significant sources of pollution within a watershed. If 95% of the sediment pollution in a given watershed is from silviculture activities, and 5% is from urban runoff, try to find projects that address silviculture first.
- Establish a clear linkage between the problem and your proposed solution.
- Explain how you will measure the success of your project.
- Clearly identify the specific goals from the 2007 Montana Nonpoint Source Management Plan, a TMDL, or a WRP that are applicable to your project.
- Identify any permits, permissions, or authorities that will need to be obtained in order to complete the project (e.g. 310 permit, permission to access land, other?).
- Consult with the appropriate DNRC Regional Office to determine whether or not a water right permit will be necessary for your proposed project.
- Avoid projects with an unclear or weak relationship to water quality. For example, weed control, invasive species control, fish screens, wildlife habitat enhancement, replacement of aging irrigation intake structures, protection of bridges and buildings from channel migration, etc. are not appropriate 319 projects.
- Avoid projects that involve rip-rap, buried revetments (aka time-delayed rip-rap), and toe-rock. Instead, focus on opportunities for bioengineering and vegetative solutions.
- Avoid large, water quality monitoring projects. Monitoring should be a means to an end, a tool to answer specific questions. For example, you probably don't need to conduct three years worth of monthly monitoring to determine whether or not a feedlot straddling a creek is having a negative effect on water quality.

5.0 CRITERIA SPECIFICALLY FOR GROUNDWATER PROTECTION / RESTORATION PROJECTS

Section 5.0 includes requirements, priorities, and recommendations that pertain specifically to the Groundwater Protection/Restoration Project category. These are in addition to requirements mentioned in **Sections 1.0** through **3.0**. This guidance may or may not appear in the Scoring Sheets used by the Agency Review Panel. However, it will factor heavily into other parts of the application review process, and it will ultimately influence which projects DEQ recommends to EPA for funding.

5.1 REQUIREMENTS

Requirements are things that must be addressed in order for your application to be considered for funding.

- Projects in this category must address nonpoint source (NPS) pollution to groundwater.
- Projects must implement goals and objectives identified in the 2007 Montana Nonpoint Source Management Plan. Hardcopies are available upon request, or electronically at http://deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/nonpoint/2007NONPOINTPLAN/Final/NPSPlan.pdf .
- In addition, the requirements below apply to all projects in this category.

5.1.1 Education and Outreach Component

All projects must contain a task dedicated to education and outreach (E&O). The E&O task must identify the target audience, information to be disseminated, method of delivery, and method of monitoring the E&O effort to evaluate effectiveness. The E&O task must be related to both your project and water quality. For example, if your project involves monitoring groundwater contamination from pesticides in the Green Corn Creek watershed, your E&O project should address pesticide contamination of groundwater in the Green Corn Creek watershed.

DEQ limits the amount of 319 Groundwater Protection/Restoration funds that can be allocated towards E&O to 10% of the total 319 funds requested for each grant. The cost cap only applies to the 319 funds requested. Applicants can obligate greater amounts of funds for their E&O activities from other funding sources in order to meet the match requirements. You must justify the costs associated with E&O activities. Justification must be based on the activities' benefit to the project and positive influence towards improving water quality.

5.1.2 Monitoring Component

If you are proposing to conduct on-the-ground projects to address nitrogen or phosphorus pollution, the task must include the calculation of annual load reductions achieved as a result of your project. Monitoring does not necessarily mean obtaining a sample and sending it to a lab. It can also include modeling, aerial reconnaissance, and other forms of evaluation. All water quality monitoring must be guided by a DEQ-approved Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP) and/or a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). If your organization does not already have an existing, approved, applicable SAP/QAPP, you will be required to develop one prior to conducting any sampling. You should expect the development and approval process to take at least a month, depending upon the complexity of the project, your own familiarity with SAPs and QAPPs, and the availability of DEQ review staff. All monitoring data collected as part of a 319 grant must be uploaded into the MT-eWQX database. Depending upon your familiarity with this process, you can expect to spend a day or more learning the procedure and submitting the data.

5.2 PRIORITIES

Priorities are issues that DEQ would like to see addressed. They are not required, but choosing to address one or more of them could significantly increase the likelihood of receiving 319 funds. They include:

- Projects that result in the completion and/or implementation of a MDEQ-approved, Source Water Protection Plan (SWPP) for a groundwater source Public Water Supply having a high or

very high susceptibility rating for one or more significant potential contaminant sources. Source Water Delineation and Assessment Reports (SWDARs) for public water supplies can be located on the web at http://nris.state.mt.us/wis/swap/swapquery.asp.

- Projects that implement groundwater quality recommendations in a DEQ-approved TMDL document or a DEQ-accepted Watershed Restoration Plan.
- Projects that lead to significant, measurable, long-lasting reductions in or protection from NPS pollution to groundwater.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following list includes helpful suggestions for you to consider as you prepare and submit your application. Issues raised here reflect experiences from previous funding cycles. Not all of them will apply to your specific project.

- Thoroughly review all available data to avoid duplication in monitoring efforts.
- Describe how you will define and evaluate project success.
- Clearly demonstrate stakeholder support and/or involvement in choosing which projects to pursue.
- Identify the long-term benefits your project will have to groundwater quality.
- Groundwater projects can be very complex. Please demonstrate that your organization has, or can obtain assistance from, individuals with the skills and expertise to successfully complete your proposed project.
- Consult with hydrogeologists who may be familiar with existing conditions in your proposed project area (e.g. staff from DNRC Water Resources Division, DEQ, Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology, Montana State University, and University of Montana).
- Consult with the appropriate DNRC Regional Office to determine whether or not a water right permit will be necessary for your proposed project.
- Describe groundwater / surface water interaction in the project area.
- Describe the aquifer's designated use classification, and discuss to what extent the designated uses of the water resource are being met.
- If the proposed project targets a public water supply, discuss the health effect(s) of the identified potential contaminants.
- Consider including the following tasks as applicable: development and implementation of a Source Water Protection Plan (SWPP); Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP) development followed by field monitoring or modeling; and post-implementation monitoring to gauge SWPP implementation effectiveness.
- Avoid large monitoring projects. Monitoring should be a means to an end, a tool to answer specific questions. For example, you probably don't need to conduct three years worth of monthly monitoring to determine the direction of flow in a shallow groundwater aquifer.

6.0 CRITERIA FOR EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PROJECTS

Section 6.0 includes requirements, priorities, and recommendations that pertain specifically to the Education and Outreach project category. These are in addition to requirements mentioned in **Sections 1.0** through **3.0**. This guidance may or may not appear in the Scoring Sheets used by the Agency Review

Panel. However, it will factor heavily into other parts of the application review process, and it will ultimately influence which projects DEQ recommends to EPA for funding.

6.1 REQUIREMENTS

Requirements are things that must be addressed in order for your application to be considered for funding.

- Address nonpoint source (NPS) pollution.
- Projects must implement goals and objectives identified in the 2007 Montana Nonpoint Source Management Plan. Hardcopies are available upon request, or electronically at http://deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/nonpoint/2007NONPOINTPLAN/Final/NPSPlan.pdf .
- Clearly identify the target audience and the changes in behavior or thought you expect to see as a result of the project.
- Include a method for measuring project success.

In addition, the requirements below apply to all projects in this category.

6.1.1 Monitoring Component

If your E&O project includes on-the-ground activities to address nitrogen, phosphorus or sediment pollution, you must determine the annual load reductions achieved by your project. In your final application, you must indicate how you will determine these load reductions.

If your project will involve the collection of water quality data, you will likely be required to develop a Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP) to guide your efforts and ensure appropriate quality control. Typically, if you are collecting data that you will use to make decisions and guide future projects and planning, you will need to prepare a SAP. If you are simply using monitoring as a method of engaging students or getting program participants up close and personal with their stream, a SAP may not be necessary. Please contact DEQ staff for assistance in determining whether or not a SAP will be required. DEQ staff can also help you determine what kind of time and resources you may need, should a SAP be necessary.

6.2 PRIORITIES

Priorities are issues that DEQ would like to see addressed. They are not required, but choosing to address one or more of them could significantly increase the likelihood of receiving 319 funds. **The highest priority is given to addressing NPS pollution problems identified in a DEQ-approved TMDL document.** Other priorities include:

- Projects that implement E&O recommendations in a DEQ-accepted Watershed Restoration Plan.
- Projects that develop, complete and / or implement statewide or watershed-wide E&O campaigns identified in the 2007 Montana Nonpoint Source Management Plan's Five-Year Action Plan. Referring to **Table 5.3** in **Section 5** of the 2007 Montana NPS Management Plan, E&O campaigns should target urban growth and development issues, riparian and wetland buffer protection, or small farm and ranch NPS pollution.
- Projects that include promotion, development, and coordination of watershed groups, development and certification of volunteer monitors in watershed groups, establishment and expansion of water curriculum in schools through coordination with statewide organizations, or

development and promotion of BMP training for state, county, and city road maintenance personnel.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following list includes helpful suggestions for you to consider as you prepare and submit your application. Issues raised here reflect experiences from previous funding cycles. Not all of them will apply to your specific project.

- Choose the target audience with the greatest potential for solving the NPS problem you are trying to address.
- Choose the method of delivery that is most appropriate for the intended audience.
- Collaborate with other organizations on the delivery of the message.
- Work to educate, not merely inform.
- Provide immediate opportunities for people to act on the information you give them (e.g. through hands-on learning opportunities).
- If your project will be conducted on a watershed-scale, discuss how the project could be evaluated for potential use in other regions of the State.
- Use the explanation and examples of social marketing found in the E&O Strategy of the 2007 Montana NPS Management Plan to direct target audience activities.
- If your proposed project is a continuation of a multi-year project explain how this project builds on previous efforts.
- Check to make sure that your efforts won't duplicate previous or current education and outreach efforts.
- If you hope to use 319 funds for hosting an event (for example, a field day or tour), ensure that NPS pollution is the primary focus of the event, and not merely a sidebar to the occasion.
- Don't over-commit. It's easy to think that education and outreach projects don't cost very much money, so why not do a whole bunch of them. Often, these projects become costly in a hurry.